PHELPS MSS.

New York, Dec 27/37.

Lewis Tappan.

Dear Brother Phelps,

117

I read your letter with much interest, & thank you for the admonition. I have observed, with regret, the perversity of the person you named for exaggeration, but had not remarked it in myself! - The disposition in both to make fun I had noticed. I will try to profit by what you say & desire you to be as faithful to S. as you have been to me.

Your opinion about the present system of soliciting funds may be true. Br Weld, to whom I read yr letter, thinks it is. The Finance Com. will ponder yr observations, and whether you believe it or not, your opinion will be as respectfully considered as that of any other man.

When I read in the U.R. Spectator that the late call for the formation of an Evangelical Anti-S. Soc. was intended for professors & new professors I wrote to J. Gulliver that if it was not a typographical error, the scheme would be the laughing stock of the whole nation. Now professors! Evangelical men! - Is it possible the brethren can seriously design to oppose Unitarianism, Universalism, Garrisonism, etc. by inviting ungodly men in Orthodox Congregations to unite with them? After dispatching my letter I saw your warning in the Liberator. Dr Hawes' letter to the Ex-Com. will be a damper to those who were plan a new Soc.

With respect to your observations about a pro-rata organization of another kind it opens matter for very serious prayerful consideration. You have heard me express sentiments on that subject in the Ex-Com. I refused to vote for agents when I did not believe to be pious men. From the beginning I have looked upon the anti-S. as a religious one, and that it should be confided to religious men, pious men rather, to advocate & carry it on. As to having no organization separate from the church there are strong objections. All church members are not christians, & many of them are more difficult to be moved than infidels, on this subject.

When I was on the Ex-Com. of the Sabbath

Union Justin Edwards recommended action of the chhs as such. Dr Dewitt opposed it, not for the reason I have given, but for this – the chhs, he said, were already bound to keep the Sabbath holy & it was better to remind them of existing obligations rather than to have new pledges.

I doubt not there are many members & private xians who have kept back from joining the Am. S. Societies because they were unwilling to associate in such an enterprise with irreligious sometimes wicked men. I have thought they acted unwisely.

If churches are all xians, & were they disposed to act on the subject of abolition, certainly no other organizations would be necessary to carry on the ends of S. cause.

Long ago I told Br Weld that my idea of the best mode of proceeding would be to send our agents to the churches. Let them go into the lecture rooms & vestries, & then into the Sanctuary, & address churches as such, and I thought more good would be done; but we are scarred to agree with me.

My present opinion is that instead of laboring to abolitionize the churches the better way would be to form new churches — abolition churches. Do as we did when we began the Free church system. Instead of wasting our strength on the old churches, as we were advised to do, I infused more heat into them, we kindled new fires, & with Gods blessing, the new system prevailed. But there is a difficulty in forming

abolition chs. It would be almost if not quite impossible to agree upon a system of faith that would unite classes of the various denominations even of evangelical sentiments. If it were possible, or proper, to unite all sectarian peculiarities, and form new churches the grand feature of which should be the abolition of all sin — according to the theory of W. L. G. in his prospectus — and if really pious, self-denying, praying, fearless men should undertake them I have no doubt the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon them. But do these religion enough among us for such a christian enterprise?

I shall be much pleased to hear from you that interesting & important subject, & pray that in your reflections facts you may be candid & discriminating. Mr Duffield comes out boldly & the Tabernacle & the anti S. side. The 3d ch (that the influence of the Johnstons) have given a call to Rev Joel Parker! —

With true regard yours

Lewis Tappan

What could be done with such a man as H. Winslow if you carried action to the chs?

Would he not counteract all anti S. influence in that ch?

I H Kimball of Concord N H seems to be more of a man than H. W.

Rev. Amos A Phelps

Boston

MW